PKI Moves on Board with DoN Smart Cards

DON CIO Migrates Smart Cards to the Next Step

Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) is an enabling tool for information systems and applications that will provide strong authentication so that business practices can be improved and secured. It will improve services over the World Wide Web, VPNs (Virtual Private Network), and Intranets. In short, PKI is the Department of the Navy's (DoN) security safety net for electronic commerce of the future. Elements of PKI include digital certificates and Smart Card technology.

As part of the Information Assurance Program and implementation of PKI, the DoN will begin issuing certificates in year 2000. These certificates will eventually be Class 4 (Smart Cards with internal cryptographic keys). The Smart Card uses multiple technologies (magnetic stripe, microprocessor, and bar code). These technologies will revolutionize the way DoN conducts business. The DoN will use the Smart Card as their hardware token to authenticate individual access (i.e. verifying individual's cyberID) to networks and Web sites. Once this authentication takes place, process owners can conduct a multitude of secure electronic tasks. The Smart Card will ensure the person entering the network is who he/she says he/she is, and provides authenticated back-end database access.

Using these technologies, the DoN can move infrastructure and business practices to a "Self Service Model" for servicemembers. For example, if a servicemember desires to view his/her medical record to verify its accuracy, that member will have access to the database(s), which contain the needed information.

Editor's Note: This information is available in the public domain at **http://www.don-cio.navy.mil.**